

## **PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD**

**MONDAY, APRIL 9, 2007**

**3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II**

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:04 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with members Senhauser, Sullebarger, Spraul-Schmidt and Kreider present. Absent: Chatterjee, Wallace and Raser.

Mr. Senhauser, Historic Conservation Board Chair, stated that the Board was not able to establish a quorum of five members and so, the Board could take no official action at this meeting. He said that the Board would take testimony from attendees and that all items would continue to the next meeting.

### **MINUTES**

The minutes for the March 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> meetings were not approved due to the lack of quorum.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 508-510, 512 & 514-516 READING ROAD, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Adrienne Cowden presented a report for the renovation of 508-510, 512 & 514-516 Reading Road as the Pendleton Glass House Lofts. She stated that the buildings were once part of the H. Neuer Glass Company and were utilized for shipping and warehousing.

Ms. Cowden stated that 512 and 514-516 Reading Road were contributing resources. The main façades would be stripped of paint and sealed or repainted a single uniform color to visually unify the project. The unpainted side and rear elevations would be cleaned, repaired and sealed. Since removing the existing paint on the main facades would likely damage the surface and since the coating presently masks alterations and protects the 19<sup>th</sup> century masonry, staff recommends that the facades be simply repaired and repainted. All of the windows would be replaced with new wood, vinyl or aluminum-clad sash. The storefront at 514-516 Reading would be removed and four new window openings would be installed.

Although 508-510 Reading Road is listed as a contributing building, further research and historic maps indicated the building was constructed in the 1950s, outside the accepted period of significance for the historic district and should be treated as a non-contributing resource. The glass façade would be removed and a new brick veneer installed. Staff would prefer the glass façade be repaired or replaced. However, based on documentation submitted by the applicant, repairing the façade is not possible and wholesale replacement would be cost prohibitive. The second floor windows on the main façade would be enlarged by lowering the sills 16".

Ms. Sullebarger commented that the staff report was well researched and that the documentation was very helpful in making an informed decision. She asked if there was any information regarding the appearance of the first floor at 514-516 Reading Road, prior to the 1940s. Ms. Cowden stated that she checked various sources and did not find any photographs or descriptions, but that it was likely the building had some type of storefront.

Richard S. Hunter, Creative Shelter Architects & Engineers, stated that he was in agreement with the staff report and his client had no issue with any of staff's recommendations.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 10 E. 15<sup>TH</sup> STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Ms. Cowden presented a staff report on the installation of 18 new vinyl windows with six-over-six sandwich grid that have been installed in 10 E. 15<sup>th</sup> Street without a permit or a Certificate of Appropriateness. She indicated that Big Dog Holdings, LLC is renovating the building into three

market rate rental units and has a sweat equity loan with Cincinnati Development Fund for the project. Ms. Cowden explained that staff learned after the report was written that the project was receiving CDBG funds through the City and that staff had approved a Jeld-Wen aluminum clad replacement window. Instead, the owner installed the vinyl units.

Al Sundberg representing the owner Big Dog Holdings was present to address the Board. He indicated that the project experienced numerous delays and that the extremely tight project budget would not accommodate the purchase and installation of another set of windows. Mr. Sundberg said that he did not realize the Contour Colonial windows he ultimately installed would not meet all requirements. He chose windows that matched those in nearby buildings, and he did not remember receiving instructions that a sandwich grid was not acceptable.

In answer to Mr. Kreider, Mr. Sundberg said Big Dog Holdings also owned the buildings at 12 and 14 E. 15<sup>th</sup> Street but they were not included in this project. Work had not yet begun on these properties.

In response to Mr. Senhauser, Mr. Sundberg acknowledged that he did receive the Section 106 Compliance Rules as part of his loan package. Mr. Senhauser stated that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation required for Section 106 projects were more restrictive than the Over-the-Rhine Historic District conservation guidelines. He noted that even if the Board granted Mr. Sundberg relief from the local guidelines the windows would still not meet Section 106 requirements.

#### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS & HILLSIDE REVIEW, 3757 SACHEM AVENUE, COLUMBIA-TUSCULUM HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Urban Conservator William Forwood provided the Board with a letter from the applicant indicating that he did not wish to proceed with the construction of the proposed garage at this time.

Margo Warminski, Cincinnati Preservation Association, said she concurred with the staff report. She indicated that the garage as proposed was not appropriate but could be made compatible with the historic district if reduced in size and simplified in detail.

#### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, HILLSIDE REVIEW & ZONING VARIANCES, 1875 KEYS CRESCENT, EAST WALNUT HILLS HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Mr. Forwood presented a staff report on the installation of a 6' high wrought iron fence at 1875 Keys Crescent. He reminded the Board it had approved a Certificate of Appropriateness and zoning variance for an identical fence at 1873 Keys Crescent. This would be an extension of that fence across the property line to the front yard of 1875.

In response to Ms. Spraul-Schmidt, Mr. Forwood stated that 1873 and 1875 would remain as two separate parcels and that the carriage house on 1873 would continue as an independent residence.

#### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, HILLSIDE REVIEW & ZONING VARIANCES, 3733 SACHEM AVENUE, COLUMBIA-TUSCULUM HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Mr. Forwood presented a staff report on the construction of a new owner-occupied single-family house. He reminded the Board that it had reviewed this proposal on two occasions and that the current drawings presented a significant change to the ones seen previously. He outlined the design changes that now incorporate a side entry porch and redesigned front façade responding to the Board's earlier criticism. The design is now similar in design and siting to the downhill neighbor, 1931 Sachem.

Mr. Forwood indicated that the revised design is taller, wider and shorter in length than earlier versions, but still requires zoning variances for side and rear yards. In order to increase the rear yard to accommodate neighbors' concerns, the new footprint has been shortened by approximately twelve feet and moved closer to the street. As a result the new proposal will now require a front

yard variance. Staff recommends that the house be relocated so as not to require the front yard variance.

Joel King, representing the owner, and Gary Brasch, the project architect, explained the reasoning for the proposed setbacks. They described the changes made and stated that they felt the new proposal had accommodated the recommendations of the Board. Mr. King emphasized that the owner has been sensitive to the neighbors' concerns and remains flexible.

In response to Ms. Sullebarger, Mr. Brasch stated that the basement had a 9' pour with a finished height of 8'-8". The ground and second floors would be 9' and 8' in height respectively. He agreed that these dimensions might be modified or the finished floor elevations adjusted to reduce the overall height of the building.

Kathy Farro, a planner with Manley Burke, presented the Board members with a report which included diagrammed view corridors and photographs of the rear yards with setback options. She described the sightlines and argued that the current design would negatively affect the neighbors' views. She stated that the standards for a Certificate of Appropriateness and zoning variances had not been met and that the applicant should be required to build within the maximum building envelope.

In response to Mr. Senhauser, Ms. Farro said she felt that while some concessions could be made, maintaining front and rear setbacks would be best and most practical. Mr. Senhauser stated that granting a front yard variance would result in less encroachment into the rear yard with relatively little impact on 3731 Sachem. Ms. Farro stated that the new proposal would disrupt the front building line and front view, but the greater concern was for the impact on the rear

Andy Crain, 3735 Sachem Avenue, stated that he had measured all of the six neighboring houses and found that the differences in setbacks could be measured in inches. He commented that the footprint of the proposed house was 42% greater than its neighbors and did not share the same front yard setback.

Laura Dombek, 3735 Sachem Avenue, said she felt that the front façade was much improved but she still had concerns about the design and size of the house, particularly in relation to the size of the lot and the surrounding neighborhood. Ms. Dombek felt certain amenities such as walk-in closets could be downsized or eliminated to decrease the mass of the house to meet the district guidelines and Zoning Code.

Meghan Young, 3731 Sachem Avenue, read portions of a letter from Ben Young, President of the Columbia-Tusculum Community Council. She said that as an adjacent property owner she could accept the side yard variances, but that the owner has taken advantage of that concession by actually increasing the size of the house. She said the house should be shortened further to accommodate the rear yard setback required by the Zoning Code. She presented a petition, signed by 15 of the 19 Sachem Avenue neighbors, objecting to the house's oversized footprint. She indicated the neighbors are willing to work with the owner but that the Hillside Overlay and historic guidelines should be followed.

In response to Ms. Spraul-Schmidt, Ms. Young said that her garage was tiny, too small for her car or to provide usable living space. The garage door is a hard plastic and was present when she purchased her home.

In response to Mr. Senhauser, Ms. Young said that her driveway was between two short retaining walls. Mr. Senhauser asked whether a front or a rear yard variance was preferable to Ms. Young. She responded that a front yard variance was preferable, but the owner should comply with the Zoning Code. Mr. Senhauser said he felt that the front yard setback request was not necessarily inconsistent with neighboring properties and that the 4' and 1' side yard setbacks were consistent.

Arlene Golembuski, 3723 Sachem Avenue, stated that she felt that the “painted ladies” on Sachem Avenue were equally as important as the more photographed buildings on Tusculum Avenue south of Columbia Parkway. She stated that the drawings do not indicate that the rear 10’ of her house is a one-story glass greenhouse that does not obstruct neighbors’ views. She complimented the builders on the changes made to date and stated that she agreed with the Community Council’s comments. She urged the Board members to enforce the historic district guidelines.

Margo Warminski, Cincinnati Preservation Association, said she supported the staff report. She said the proposed front yard setback was at odds with historic development patterns and diminished the visual rhythm of streetscape.

Garrod Walker, Sachem Avenue resident, stated that he felt the applicant had not met the conditions required for a variance as outlined in the staff report. He stated that the applicant had not demonstrated a hardship to justify the zoning variances.

Michael Chambers, property owner and applicant, stated that he had previously owned Meghan Young’s house and occupied it as his residence for 15 years. He said the basements were stone and used primarily used for storage. The basement in his proposed house would contain livable space, so necessitated greater height. He said the exterior materials are all natural and that he had made the changes recommended by the Board and had attempted to address the neighbors’ concerns.

**ADJOURN**

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting was continued until April 23, 2007.

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William L. Forwood  
Urban Conservator

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John C. Senhauser  
Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_